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NGT WIDENS THE AMBIT OF CRACKER POLLUTION CASES

The National Green Tribunal on Wednesday issued notices to 18 states, expanding the ambit of such cases beyond the NCR

NOTICES SENT TO TN, ANDHRA, KARNATAKA

The green panel has sought response from Andhra Pradesh, Assam, Bihar, Chandigarh, Chhattisgarh, Gujarat, Himachal Pradesh, Jammu & Kashmir, Jharkhand, Karnataka, Madhya Pradesh, Maharashtra, Meghalaya, Nagaland, Tamil Nadu, Telangana, Uttarakhand and West Bengal. Notices were already issued to Delhi, Haryana and Uttar Pradesh

MAY PROHIBIT CRACKERS IN SOME CITIES

- A bench headed by NGT Chairperson Justice Adarsh Kumar Goel noted that Odisha and Rajasthan have already issued a notification prohibiting the sale and use of firecrackers
- The tribunal said it may prohibit the use of firecrackers in cities where air quality is generally beyond permissible limits

Nov 7-30

DELHI, RAJASTHAN, HARYANA AND U.P. TOLD TO BAN CRACKERS IN THIS PERIOD

CHENNAI • MADURAI • VIJAYAWADA • BENGALURU • KOCHI • HYDERABAD • VISAKHAPATNAM • COIMBATORE • KOZHIKODE • THIRUVANANTHAPURAM • BELAGAVI • BHUBANESWAR • SHIVAMOGGA • MANGALURU • TIRUPATI • TIRUCHY • TIRUNELVELI • SAMBALPUR • HUBBALLI • DHARMAPURI • KOTTAYAM • KANNUR • VILLUPURAM • KOLLAM • WARANGAL • TADEPALLIGUDEM • NAGAPATTINAM • THRISSUR • KALABURAGI

JOE BIDEN

248 Electoral college votes

70,320,016 votes

DONALD TRUMP

Electoral college votes 214

67,524,937 votes

270 TO WIN

BIDEN SURGES IN TIGHT RACE

Trump prematurely claims victory, wants to stop all voting, threatens to approach SC; Biden projected to win more popular votes than any president in American history; four Indian American Democrats re-elected to the House

EXPRESS NEWS SERVICE

THE race for the White House between Donald Trump and his Democratic challenger Joe Biden was on the razor's edge on Wednesday with the nervous president prematurely claiming victory, demanding a halt to all voting and threatening to go to the Supreme Court. Trump's diatribe was tied to the understanding that most of the mail-in ballots would go to Biden.

"We won't rest until every vote is counted," Biden shot back, adding it is for the voters to decide the outcome and not the contestants. His campaign said their legal teams were on stand-by to resist Trump's attempt to go to the court to stop tabulating the ballots.

With millions of votes still to be counted, the battle had essentially boiled down to a handful of swing states. While Trump won Florida — closing his challenger's path to an early victory — and was leading in Pennsylvania and Georgia, Biden managed to flip Arizona, a state that has supported a Democratic presidential candidate only once in the past 72 years. Biden was also leading in battleground states like Michigan and Wisconsin.

Officials in Pennsylvania said they expect all votes to be counted by Friday. The Biden camp believes that will give them an edge, while the Trump campaign fears that there could be electoral malpractice during the counting of votes.

People gather in Black Lives Matter Plaza near White House in Washington on Tuesday, on Election Day | AP

Trump himself articulated the fear, calling the election "a fraud on the American public". "This is a major fraud on our nation. We want law to be used in a proper manner. So we'll be going to the US Supreme Court," he said. The delay in counting the postal ballots means the final outcome may not be known for days, if not weeks.

Amid the cliff-hanger, there was something to cheer about as all four Democratic Indian-American lawmakers — Dr Ami Bera, Pramila Jayapal, Ro Khanna and Raja Krishnamoorthi — were re-elected to House of Representatives.

Also called the Samosa caucus, the informal grouping of Indian-American lawmakers could have at least one more member as physician Dr Hiral Tipirneni was leading against Republican incumbent David Schweikert from the sixth Congressional district of Arizona.

Also, filmmaker Mira Nair's son Zohran Kwame Mamdani won the election for New York State Assembly.

As for the House of Representatives, Democrats appeared to extend control over it for two more years but with a shrunken majority, as at least seven incumbents lost their seats. The race for Senate control was tight though analysts expected Republicans to edge ahead.

FULL COVERAGE: P11

STATES WAITING FOR THE VERDICT*

Past midnight, Wisconsin with 10 electoral votes flipped in Biden's favour, putting him 22 short of a clean victory

Michigan	16 Electoral votes	94% votes reported
	Biden 2,629,877 • 49.6%	Trump 2,581,701 • 48.7%
Georgia	16 Electoral votes	93% votes reported
	Trump 2,389,263 • 50.3%	Biden 2,303,428 • 48.5%
Pennsylvania	20 Electoral votes	80% votes reported
	Trump 3,061,817 • 53.4%	Biden 2,595,192 • 45.3%
Nevada	6 Electoral votes	86% votes reported
	Biden 588,252 • 49.9%	Trump 580,605 • 48.7%
North Carolina	15 Electoral votes	95% votes reported
	Trump 2,732,120 • 50.1%	Biden 2,655,383 • 48.7%
Alaska	3 Electoral votes	36% votes reported
	Trump 80,999 • 61.4%	Biden 45,758 • 34.7%

*As of 1 am. Source: Politico

KEY QUESTIONS

Who all are in the race?
While Donald Trump and Joe Biden are fighting presidential polls, polling has also happened for 35 Senate, 11 gubernatorial and 435 congressional seats

Who is ahead in the popular vote count?
Biden is. By over 1.5%

Why are popular votes not the barometer of victory?
Because the US president is elected by an electoral college, not the majority vote count. Trump in 2016 was declared elected as he had more electoral college votes than challenger Hillary, who won more popular votes than him

How does electoral college work?
Each state has a fixed number of electoral votes. The party that wins a state pockets all its electoral votes. So, the trick lies in winning states with large electoral votes. In 2016, Trump secured 304 electoral votes as against Hillary's 227

What is the half-way mark?
It's 270 as the total electoral vote count is 538

Why is the counting getting delayed?
Because mass postal ballots were allowed due to Covid. While states like Florida counted them as they arrived before election day, others chose to begin counting only after all votes had been polled. The volume of postal ballots is huge. In some states, only mail-in ballots were allowed

Why is Trump hassled by postal ballots?
Because most of them are Democrat leaning. The majority of in-person votes went to Trump

What about the House of Representatives and Senate races?
The House appears set to stay with Democrats. But its drive to capture the Senate may fall short

SC closes escape route to bypass paying alimony

KANU SARDA @ New Delhi

IN a big relief to women, the Supreme Court has issued detailed guidelines tightening the rules regarding maintenance in matrimonial cases. Now, both spouses will have to disclose their income and assets from the date the maintenance application is filed. Also, those who fail to pay maintenance could be arrested and jailed.

"Maintenance laws have been enacted as a measure of social justice to provide recourse to dependant wives and children for their financial support, so as to prevent them from falling into destitution and vagrancy," the judgment read. A bench of Justices Indu Malhotra and Subash Reddy also laid down several criteria that must be considered while calculating the quantum of maintenance.

The court had taken up the issue while hearing a case where a plea for maintenance filed by a woman had remained pending for more than seven years in various courts, while the husband had stopped paying even interim maintenance for the wife and child.

Guidelines stated that detailed affidavits disclosing all sources of income, assets and liabilities must be filed by both parties — the claimant must file all details along with the application for maintenance, while the respondent must file their details within four weeks. The Delhi High Court is already implementing these set of measures as and when the maintenance petition is filed.

The court also took note of that in many cases, husbands refuse to pay alimony amount by disposing of assets and claiming reduced income.

"If false statements and misrepresentations are made, the court may consider initiation of perjury proceedings and for contempt of court," said the bench.

CONTINUED ON: P9

KARNATAKA EYES TESLA R&D CENTRE

The State Government is in talks with the US electric vehicle maker and several other firms to establish their R&D centres, as well as manufacturing bases here, DyCM C N Ashwath Narayan said on Tuesday | P12

27.3 pc in state infected by Covid-19: Sero survey

EXPRESS NEWS SERVICE @ Bengaluru

THE sero survey conducted in Karnataka has revealed that of the 7.07 crore population, 1.93 crore (27.3 per cent) are either currently Covid-infected or already had the infection in the past. The findings are based on data as of September 16, 2020. The results of the survey of 15,624 people were released by Health and Medical Education Minister Dr K Sudhakar on Wednesday.

Three types of tests were done — the antigen and RT-PCR to find active infection, and antibody test to determine whether people were previously infected with the virus and developed antibodies (IgG antibody) to the virus. "At the state level, it was estimated that there were 40 undetected infected individuals for every RT-PCR confirmed case, i.e., Case-to-Undetected-Infections Ratio (CUIR) of 1:40," said a release from the health department.

The state's seroprevalence of IgG antibody was 16.4 per cent, and 12.7 per cent of the apparently healthy population in the surveyed area was found to have an active infection. The overall adjusted prevalence of Covid-19 was 27.3 per cent (16.4 per cent plus 12.7 per cent). In Bengaluru Urban, the IgG prevalence is 22 per cent and active infection is 9.2 per cent, taking the prevalence rate to 29.8 per cent. P7

Power bills to rise from this month

EXPRESS NEWS SERVICE @ Bengaluru

THE monthly electricity bill of an average middle-class household will increase by 5.92 per cent with effect from this month. A consumer who paid Rs 1,352 a month for consuming 200 units of 3KW power will now have to pay ₹1,432.

This is because, the Karnataka Electricity Regulatory Commission (KERC) has revised the power tariff and hiked it by 40 paise per unit with an average increase of 5.40 per cent, compared to 33 paise per unit last year. The steep rise in tariff is attributed to the rise in costs the Escoms are facing annually in transmission and maintenance.

The KERC Commissioner issued the revision orders on Wednesday after holding a virtual meeting with the heads of all the Escoms.

CONTINUED ON: P5

'REVISION A DISASTER'

Energy expert MG Prabhakar said that nothing could be so disastrous than this revision. The panel should have considered the pending and future liabilities too. Investments and production will take a hit because of the regulatory asset creation of ₹1,443 crore.

Arnab Goswami arrives in a police van to be produced in Alibaug court | PTI

Outrage as Arnab arrested, sent to 14-day custody

EXPRESS NEWS SERVICE @ Mumbai

THE Maharashtra Police on Wednesday arrested Republic TV Editor-in-Chief Arnab Goswami for allegedly abetting the suicide of a 53-year-old interior designer, Anvay Naik, in Raigad in 2018. Goswami was produced before the magistrate court in Alibaug where he alleged the police physically assaulted him. Following this, the court ordered a medical examination on him at the civil hospital.

The police sought Goswami's custody for 14 days, but the court held that custodial interrogation was not required. Goswami, along with two other accused, was remanded in judicial custody till November 18.

Earlier, there was high drama at the Goswami's residence in Mumbai when Raigad police turned up to arrest him. The journalist fired a volley of questions at the police team and reportedly argued with them. Following this, he was forcibly taken into custody. Later, the Mumbai police also registered an FIR against Arnab, his wife and son on charges of obstructing and intimidating a police officer on duty.

According to police, the arrest is in response to a complaint by Naik's wife Akshata that her husband committed suicide because he was not paid for the work done for Republic TV studio. According to the complaint, Naik did the interiors for Republic TV's studio in Mumbai for ₹5.40 crore. However, the money was allegedly not paid. P8,10